

**Ephesians:
God's New Family**

Date	Weekly Theme	
January 7	Ephesians 1	<i>All things belong to God</i>
January 14	Ephesians 2	<i>Radical Grace - People made for a purpose</i>
January 21	Ephesians 3	<i>The Servant Family</i>
January 28	Ephesians 4:1-24	<i>Family Unity</i>
February 4	Ephesians 4:25-6:9	<i>Living a new life</i>
February 11	Ephesians 6:10-24	<i>Family Armor</i>

Small Group Time

Take time to greet each other, share names if necessary. We will share highs, lows, and prayer concerns as a group.

Questions and Review from last week's discussion.

What did your discipleship look like over the last two weeks?

How is your faith maturing?

This week's discussion

Read the text aloud – Ephesians 4:25-6:9 (Differing versions if possible)

What did you hear?

What, if anything, caught your attention?

How does the overall message impact you?

GROUP DISCUSSION

Address the following questions:

- * *Name a sin that has had it's grasp on you, or perhaps still does.*
- * *How have you in the past, been able to cast off an old way of being, in order to live into a new way of life?*
- * *Share how you experience living in the tension with both rules (Law) and with grace.*

- **Processing the above questions.**
- **Rules for the New Life!**
- **St. Paul's laundry list? Name Yours:**
- **4:25**
 - Stop telling lies
 - Tell our neighbors the truth
 - Applies to all human relationships
 - Recall the image of the church as the body of Christ (2:10)
- **4:26**
 - Don't sin by letting anger control you
 - Don't let sun go down on your anger
- **4:27**
 - Don't give the devil a foothold
 - Addresses the ease from which anger passes over to sin
 - Anger – when it happens – should be brief
 - Do not let the devil have opportunities with you
 - No place – no entry – no room
- **4:28**
 - Quit stealing
 - Use your hands for good work
 - Give generously to those in need
 - The goal of work is not acquisition – but contribution
- **4:29**
 - Do not use foul or abusive language
 - Let everything you say be helpful, encourage others
 - Grace is God's activity, we participate when speak to build up
- **4:30**
 - Do not bring sorrow to God's Holy Spirit by the way you live
 - God has identified you as God's own, Marked with a seal
 - Redemption – both present and future
- **4:31**
 - Get rid of all bitterness
 - Get rid of all rage
 - Get rid of all anger
 - Get rid of all harsh words and slander
 - Get rid of evil behavior
- **4:32 INSTEAD,**
 - Be kind to one another
 - Be tenderhearted
 - Be forgiving of one another
 - As God in Christ has forgiven you!
 - This is the reason for our loving behavior (because...therefore)
 - How can the Christian refuse to forgive when the same has been given to you?

- **Chapter 5 - Be imitators of God**
 - What does this look like for you?
- **Ephesians 5:1 is the only explicit directive in the entire Bible that calls the community to imitate God!**
 - Living a life filled with love – is how the Christian imitates God.
 - Live in love, as Christ loved us, and gave himself up for us
 - Is this possible – or just an ideal?
 - Are we in love with the idea of this, but not in love with the idea of living this?
 - Where is this grace we talk so much about?
- **5:5**
 - Be sure of this, that no immoral, impure or greedy person will inherit the kingdom of Christ (only time used in NT) and of God!
 - Who do you say has no inheritance in the kingdom of God?
 - What is the kingdom of God?
 - Does inheritance imply “only happening at the end of time?”
- **5:6-7**
 - Do not be fooled by those who try to excuse their sins!
 - Who then will share with them the gospel of peace?
- **5:8-14**
 - Live as people of the light
 - Light is found in all that is good and right and true
 - Determine (discern) what is pleasing to the Lord
 - The light makes everything visible. Sleeper awake! Rise from the dead, and Christ will shine on you!
- **5:15-20**
 - Be wise – make the most of your time!
 - Be filled with the Spirit!
 - Give thanks at all times!

- **The Christian Household**
 - Head of the household was expected to hold all three roles – husband, father, and master.
 - Luther: A Christian is a perfectly free Lord of all, subject to none. A Christian is a perfectly dutiful servant of all, subject to all.
- **5:21**
 - Husbands and wives - Submit to one another
- **5:32**
 - What does this mean? This is a great mystery, and I am applying it to Christ and the church
 - The mystery is in relationships
 - The **mystery** is in how God works in relationships
 - Paul may have it backwards here, he takes human relationships and describes the relationship of Christ and the church, rather than applying Christ to our lives. Is there a difference?
 - All about self-sacrifice!
- **6:1-4 Children and parents – be subject to one another**
 - Obey parents
 - Honor parents
 - Promise attached – “Live long and prosper”
 - Parents – do not provoke children to anger, teach them
- **6:5-9 Slaves and Masters – be subject to one another**
 - Slaves - Obey – not just when watched – but at all times – do good
 - Masters - Do the same
 - No partiality – all have same Master in Heaven!
- In sum, no area of human relationships was separated from a Christological focus, that called for mutuality and respect within the community of Christ!

Questions for Reflection

How do you wrestle through the dynamics of human relationships?

What area of your relationships need the most work? Why?

How might regularly living these words change how you experience life?

Thoughts and Comments

Closing Prayer